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vented from enjoying a good night's rest by the number of other occupants. My cook prepared my meals at the little fireplace in the middle of the room. The villagers sat about and visited with us. When meal-time came the women and girls brought in their generous supplies of food, consisting of two large trays piled high with snow-white steaming rice, besides smaller trays and bowls filled with several kinds of curry, "ngape" water, and vegetables. The visitors were expected to eat something from every dish. While the meal was in progress the hosts withdrew, except one or two elders, the women returning afterwards to clear away the dishes and uneaten food with the polite remark that their guests had eaten very little. Many shared in receiving us; and we were spared the embarrassment, not to say the danger according to our belief, of violating the tabu that prevented our being entertained at the time by a family in their own quarters.

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Besides serving as a guest-chamber, the "blaw" has another important use, namely, as the gathering-place for the young men of the village. When a boy becomes a youth ("hpo tha hkwa taw"), he is expected to spend his leisure time in his parents' room, working and eating with them, as seems to be the custom. When evening comes, he repairs to the "blaw" to be with his fellows and to sleep there. This is a custom that is common among the Kachins of Burma and many other tribes of the Orient. Among the Kachins the "blaw" is a place of license. The Brecs also allow a great deal of liberty to their young people, and evidently advantage of it is taken by them. But among the Sgaw Karens, at any rate, the girls remain with their mothers. There is no common room for the girls, or any place where both youths and maidens may meet for restrained intercourse. No doubt among the Karen the use of the "blaw" as a club-room is for the purpose of keeping the young men together and separating them from the young women, thus preventing offence of the "by na," which would bring a curse upon the soil and damage to the crops.

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[784]

It has never been possible for parents to prevent all social intercourse between young people of the opposite sexes. In fact, it has hardly ever been attempted. As is shown elsewhere in this volume, there are occasions among the Karen when the sexes mingle, for example, on fishing expeditions and at marriages, funerals, etc. If, however, a youth desires to visit a maiden, etiquette prescribes the way: he must take his harp ("t'na"), appear before her house, and serenade her. Sitting down, he sings to the accom-

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[i.e. Not being allowed in family rooms during the Hpha feast -- Analyst]

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paniment of his instrument. If she replies to his request to be permitted to visit with her, she does so on the jew's-harp ("t'xe"), answering him in verse. He than mounts the ladder and they visit together, either singing over "htas" already familiar to them or, if skilled in improvising, putting their own thoughts into rhyme. If too long an interval should elapse without the sound of either instrument, the elders would very likely put in an appearance to find out the reason.

SLAVERY

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Slavery no longer exists among the Karen; but when it did, it was incidental to war. The British acquisition of Lower Burma during the thirty years before 1886 brought with it the cessation of village raids and tribal conflicts in which the captives taken might, and frequently did, become slaves. Such captives were treated according to the changing whims of their masters. When first brought in they might be harangued by the leader of the victorious war-band, in case he chose to denounce them for starting the war and to recount all the alleged or real wrongs they and their people had inflicted upon him and his village. The proof of their guilt lay in their capture. While being kept in captivity they were subject to rough treatment, such as beating and wounds, which might be preliminary to their being killed. If they were spared and not redeemed within a short time, they were either kept as slaves or sold to traders, who might be other Karens or Shans. Old people were not marketable, and it was difficult to find buyers for them at any price. Men and women in the prime of life, that is, between the ages of thirty and forty years, brought about one hundred rupees each; young men and maidens, approximately three hundred rupees each, and boys and girls from twelve to fifteen years, who were considered the most valuable, sold for four hundred rupees each. Such prices did not always prevail, for Mr. Mason in 1868 reported that once, when he was in Karenni, he saw two Shan women brought in and sold at fourteen rupees apiece.

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While slavery was a recognized institution among the Karen, it does not seem to have become a rigid system.[8] When the captives were redeemed, they returned to their previous status of

[8] This mild form of slavery, which we find previously existing among the Karen, seems rather general among some of the other peoples in the neighboring regions, as in Borneo: see Hose and MacDougal, *Pagan Tribes of Borneo*, Vol. I, 71, ff, and Cole, *Wild Tribes of the Davao District of the Philippine Islands*, 96, 182.

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long ago, because some of those present expressed a decided preference for the musical tones of this drum over those of other drums belonging to members of neighboring villages.

Although many who took part in some of the old funeral celebrations were undoubtedly under the influence of liquor and in a corresponding state of hilarity, funerals do not seem to have become the occasion of feuds or even of drunken brawls. Young people came together on more intimate terms at funerals than was permitted at other times, and some of their poems would not bear reproduction in print. Probably at times their conduct also went beyond the bounds of propriety, but such lapses seem to have been rare and bitterly regretted. However, it is clear that Karen mourners succeeded in drowning their sorrow and believed that by means of their festivities they had sent the spirit of their dead rejoicing on its way to its future abode.

342 The houses of the Padaung, another Karen tribe--1911: 8,516--are quite similar. The [301] Padaung women represent an amusing ethnographical parallel to the African Massai, with their solid heavy brass ornaments and their tremendous collars. Sometimes the Padaung form a village [621] community together with the Yimbaw-Karen (24)

24. About Yimbaw-Karen see UBG, I, 1, p. 524.

as in the villages of Naungswe near Mobye on the Nam Pilu. The place looked cleaner to me than the Karenni villages and their houses were better constructed (Plate VII, 3). A round awning covers the veranda; the single inside room is used for cooking, living, and sleeping. In [354] the center are two fireplaces which are sunk into the floor; on both sides are sleeping accommodations. Alongside the wall the floor is raised to form a low platform where vessels and all sorts of implements are kept. At the rear, to [514] the right, a bamboo screen, reaching half way to the ceiling, partitions off a kind of toilet which is an opening in the floor.

101 The Gaungto--(Sawng-tung-Zayein-) Karen--
161 1911: 4,981--belong to a tribal group where
582 more or less severe endogamic marriage rules limit the establishment of families, and this in turn has resulted in a steady decrease of the population. Consequently, one frequently finds in their villages a large number of old maids and bachelors who were unable to find suitable mates for themselves. For example, I counted in one little village, consisting only of six houses, not more than four married couples, and their families. In addition, there was one widow, and four girls and four bachelors who, because of lack of money or because of the marriage rules, had to remain single.

344 The bachelor house, a customary institution
● 883

344 with most of the Indochinese mountain tribes who
883 have not been converted to Buddhism, Hinduism, or Christianity, is therefore much frequented. (Shortly before I visited the place it had burned down, together with other dwellings.) The architecture of this building differed from the other dwellings primarily by the height of the posts or the roof (25). It is mostly used by the young

25. Cf. Schurtz, ibid., p. 419. The Hosha of Formosa, in contrast to their customary style, build their club houses on piles: J.H. Arnold, "The Ascent of Mt. Morrison," Journal of the North China British Royal Asiatic Society 40 (1909), p. 61, with illustrations after pp. 50 and 60. --About the geographic spread of men's houses cf. Schurtz, ibid., pp. 108 ff. and passim. -- About the bachelor houses at the Naga and the Dravidian Oraon in Bengal: W. Crooke, Natives of Northern Indian (London, 1907) pp. 44, 77.

males from the beginning of the age of puberty on as sleeping and living quarters. In addition, it also serves as a guest house for out-of-town visitors and as an assembly place, a kind of city hall, for the men of the village.

342 The houses of the Gaungto-Karen (Plate VII, 4) are not particularly large. At one of the average houses I measured a length of 8 1/2 meters, which included 2 1/2 meters for the veranda awning and 1 1/2 meters for the rear round roof. A notched beam served as a stairway to the veranda which had no railing. The awning sloped down so far that one had to stoop low in order to be able to enter. The front east corner post is considered the /217/ principal post, where coconuts, bananas,